



John L. Salomone
Town Manager

TOWN OF NEWINGTON

131 CEDAR STREET
NEWINGTON, CONNECTICUT 06111

MAYOR JEFF WRIGHT

Minutes

Newington Town Council

July 13, 2010

Mayor Wright called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm in the Helen Nelson Room of the Newington Town Hall.

I PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

II ROLL CALL

Councilors Present:

Councilor Banach - absent
Councilor Casasanta
Councilor Cohen
Councilor Klett
Councilor Lenares
Councilor McBride
Councilor Nagel
Council Nasinnyk
Mayor Wright

Staff Present

John Salomone, Town Manager
Jaime Trevethan, Exec. Asst. to the Town Manager
Mary Richard, Council Clerk

III PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - IN GENERAL NONE

IV EXECUTIVE SESSION RE: COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

Councilor Casasanta moved to go to Executive Session at 7:05 PM, Seconded by Councilor Nasinnyk
Vote 8 – 0 Councilor Banach Absent. All Councilors present at the regular meeting and Town Manager Salomone attended the Executive Session.

Councilor Nagel moved to adjourn from Executive Session at 7:18 PM. Motion seconded by Councilor Casasanta. Motion passed 8-0, Councilor Banach absent.

Regular Meeting resumed at 7:20 PM

V CONSIDERATION OF OLD BUSINESS

A. Consideration of Canceling the July 27, 2010 Council Meeting

RESOLVED:

That the Newington Town Council hereby alters its meeting schedule by canceling its Regular meeting scheduled for July 27, 2010.

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MOTION BY: Councilor Nagel
SECONDED BY: Councilor Casasanta
VOTE: 8 – 0 Councilor Banach absent

Mayor Wright stated that August 10, 2010 is the Democratic and Republican primary night and suggested moving meeting on the 10th of August to the first Tuesday of the month - the 3rd of August. Councilor Nasinnyk said that doing this we do not have to cancel a second meeting in the summer which would be two consecutive meetings but would equalize the spacing between the meetings

RESOLVED:
That the Newington Town Council hereby alters its meeting schedule by canceling its Regular meeting scheduled for August 10, 2010.

MOTION BY: Councilor Nagel
SECONDED BY: Councilor Casasanta
VOTE: 8 – 0 Councilor Banach absent

RESOLVED:
That the Newington Town Council hereby alters its meeting schedule by adding a Special meeting scheduled for August 3, 2010.

MOTION BY: Councilor Klett
SECONDED BY: Councilor Casasanta
VOTE: 8 – 0 Councilor Banach absent

Mayor Wright explained that our second meeting in July has been canceled; the next meeting which will be a special meeting will be on August 3, 2010.

VI CONSIDERATION OF NEW BUSINESS

A. Collective Bargaining – AFSCME Contract Agreement

Councilor Casasanta moved to waive the rules – Seconded by Councilor Nasinnyk – Vote 8 – 0 Councilor Banach absent

WHEREAS, AFSCME Local 2930 membership ratified the proposed 2010 - 2011 and 2011 - 2012 labor contract on June 26, 2010; and

WHEREAS, after said ratification by the membership the proposed contract would be considered for Town Council approval;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Newington Town Council hereby approves the proposed AFSCME Local 2930 contract for fiscal years 2010 - 2011 and 2011 - 2012, and authorizes the Town Manager to execute said contract on behalf of the Town.

MOTION BY: Councilor Nasinnyk
SECONDED BY: Councilor Casasanta
VOTE: 7 – 1 Councilor Banach absent (Roll Call Vote)

Councilor Casasanta said that she has a couple of comments on this resolution, she will be supporting it, however she did not support the budget going forward this year because of the teachers not coming forward to consider discussing any possibilities of concession, she said it's not an unreasonable request, that they should be acknowledged for what they have done in the past and she believes that this is what happens when people come to the table and are willing to talk.

Councilor Klett thanked the AFSCME employees, she said when looking at this over the period of three years it represents less than 2% for the two years identified. Also there was a change of agreement at the Senior

Center to change to contractual cleaning service which saved the Town \$30,000 so this is a reasonable increase for a job well done.

Councilor Nasinnyk thanked the Town Manager for the good faith effort in negotiating this contract and also the AFSCME members for voting on this contract because was a good faith effort in recognizing all the factors mentioned by the previous Council members. Councilor Cohen noted that it's very satisfying that not only did they vote to accept this contract but they voted in large numbers which says a lot for them.

Mayor Wright stated that he will be voting against this contract, respecting the AFSCME employees and all the hard work they do, he appreciates the fact that last year when the contract was open we did a one year bump and run of a zero percent increase with the agreement that the Town would not lay off any employees, but he believes that a 2% increase for the next two years is too high based on the economy and he feels that he cannot support that. He said that looking at what most families are not getting increases these days, he cannot support this.

ROLL CALL

Councilor Banach - absent

Councilor Casasanta - yes

Councilor Cohen - yes

Councilor Klett - yes

Councilor Lenares - yes

Councilor McBride - yes

Councilor Nagel - yes

Council Nasinnyk - yes

Mayor Wright - no

Vote passes 7 – 1 Councilor Banach absent – Mayor Wright voted no

B 8-24 Report: Sale of State Owned Land: Maple Hill Avenue and Robbins Avenue

Mr. Salomone stated that as the State Statutes require, any sale of State land has to be first offered to the local municipality where the land is located. Before we can consider it we need to refer it to the Planning and Zoning Commission for 8-24 and this Resolution tonight is merely to refer it to the Planning and Zoning and then it will come back to us for consideration of whether we wish to exercise the option to purchase it.

Mayor Wright asked if we are taking any action on this piece of land right now. Mr. Salomone said that other than the 8-24, no. Councilor Nasinnyk asked about the houses on that corner are to the east. Mr. Salomone said that yes there is a house to the east of that property. Councilor Nasinnyk said that she believes that this was the piece of property that the State took over when they re-did that intersection. She said that this is in her neighborhood and especially in the summer it gets really overgrown on that corner and must be a burden for the State. Mr. Salomone said that the Council will not be voting on this tonight, and can wait for the August meeting to do that. Mayor Wright said for those of the public who would like to see it, go to the corner of Maple Hill and Robbins Avenue, there's a sign posted. He noted that there's a cost to the State, and was concerned that the Town would bear that expense, and said it would probably make more sense for the abutting property owners to have this property. Mr. Salomone said that it is a large lot and would be buildable, almost a half acre. Councilor Klett asked why the State wouldn't just market it as a buildable lot, and Mr. Salomone stated that they can't by law, they would have to come to the Town first and they placed a value of \$56,000 on it. Councilor Klett asked if we decide not to buy it the next step is to offer it to the abutting land owner. She asked what exactly does the TPZ look at when completing an 8-24 report. Mr. Salomone said that they consider if it would fit into the plan of development. Councilor Nagel asked if would we get more information on how the Town Planners could use it. Mr. Salomone said that there are a lot of options available for when we come back for discussion. Councilor Klett asked if there is any discussion with the TPZ, and Mr. Salomone said no because if it's not in conformance with 8-24, there is a statute where we can override their interpretation which doesn't happen very often and that's the first step before ever discussing purchase it has to go through Planning & Zoning.

C. 8-24 Report: Water Main and Sanitary Sewer Easement – New Meadow Housing

Mayor Wright noted that there is action requested on this. He stated that this is a key element to bring the water and sewer to the new senior housing.

Mr. Salomone said that when MDC got back to New Samaritan they noted one quirk in the easement. MDC required easements of at least 99 years which would mean that we would have to amend our original easement to coincide with the 99 year requirement. He would like to take action on this tonight to refer it to the TPZ for a report and to get it cleared up and move forward.

Councilor Nagel asked if this is the key thing holding it up in terms of the Town. Mr. Salomone stated that we've done everything we need to do. We're set to go and they are waiting for final approval from some State agencies for final numbers.

Councilor Casasanta moved to waive the rules – Seconded by Councilor Nasinnyk – Vote 8 – 0 Councilor Banach absent.

Mayor Wright asked for Public Participation on this matter.

Rose Lyons, 46 Elton Drive, thanked the Council for the opportunity to talk about waiving the rules and giving the public a say, and asked for an explanation of the 8-24 report process for the public who may not know what it represents. She said that the senior housing construction has been a long time coming and hopes there will be action taken on this tonight.

RESOLVED:

That the Town Manager is hereby directed and authorized to submit to the Town Plan and Zoning Commission for its report in accordance with Section 8-24 of the Connecticut General Statutes, the proposed water main and sanitary sewer easements to be granted to the Metropolitan District Commission for service to the New Meadow Phase II housing.

MOTION BY: Councilor Lenares

SECONDED BY: Councilor Nasinnyk

VOTE: 8 – 0 Councilor Banach absent (Roll Call Vote)

Councilor Klett requested a Roll Call vote:

Councilor Banach - absent

Councilor Casasanta - yes

Councilor Cohen - yes

Councilor Klett - yes

Councilor Lenares - yes

Councilor McBride - yes

Councilor Nagel - yes

Council Nasinnyk - yes

Mayor Wright - yes

Vote passes 8 – 0 Councilor Banach absent

Mayor Wright noted as a Public Service Announcement that Governor Rell will be here on Wed., July 21 at 10:30 AM regarding the Senior Center and Senior information.

VII. RESIGNATION/APPOINTMENTS

A. Resignation – Employee Insurance Pension Benefits Committee

1. Accept Resignation: John Flores

RESOLVED:

That the Newington Town Council hereby accepts the resignation of John Flores from the Employee Insurance and Pension Benefits Committee, in accordance with a communication dated June 28, 2010.

MOTION BY: Councilor Casasanta

SECONDED BY: Councilor Nagel

VOTE: 8– 0 Councilor Banach absent

Councilor Klett thanked Mr. Flores for his service. This is not an easy committee to serve on and we've had a difficult time getting qualified people to serve on this committee and he has done an outstanding job and actually stayed beyond his period of time.

VIII MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Councilor Cohen added that included in the minutes of May 25th meeting an amendments to the minutes of May 11th meeting. Page 3 to 7 are changes to the May 11th meeting.

Councilor McBride noted that some of his comments were attributed to Councilor Nagel and he would speak to the Clerk regarding these changes.

Motion was made to table the minutes of May 25, 2010 by Councilor Casasanta.

Seconded by Councilor Nasinnyk. Vote 8 – 0 Councilor Banach absent.

Motion was made to accept the minutes of June 8, 2010 by Councilor Casasanta.

Seconded by Councilor Nasinnyk. Vote 7 – 0 Councilor Banach absent – Councilor Klett abstained.

Councilor Nasinnyk noted that she had not received the paper copy of the minutes of June 22, 2010, she did receive the email copy but did not print it expecting the paper. She would like to table this item.

Mayor Wright stated that this item June 22 and May 25 minutes will be tabled to the next meeting on August 3rd.

IX WRITTEN/ORAL COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE TOWN MANAGER, OTHER TOWN AGENCIES AND OFFICIALS, OTHER GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES AND OFFICIALS AND THE PUBLIC

Mr. Salomone stated that there were no reports at this time.

X COUNCIL LIAISON/COMMITTEE REPORTS

Councilor Nagel commented that NCTV had their annual picnic which was a wonderful time and are continuing in their work. He also attended the Fire Commission meeting which was also going very well there. They pointed out that they are getting an abundance of volunteers and other towns are having problems getting volunteers but not in Newington.

Councilor Klett reminded everyone that the Turf Field Committee is meeting on Thursday, July 15 at Clem Lemire.

Councilor Nasinnyk reminded everyone that the Capital Improvement Committee will be meeting on Wednesday, July 21 at 4 PM.

XI PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – IN GENERAL

Rose Lyons, 46 Elton Drive, said that she spoke with several people about blighted property in Newington and with the building enforcement officer and with the building department and there is a great concern among the people in Town about the blighted property. She understands that the problem is being worked on and will take some time. She asked that there might be some kind of notice to the public as to when there will be some discussion here at the Town Council meeting. Maybe some of the people sitting at home might come forward and show up to these meetings and express their opinions.

XII REMARKS BY COUNCILORS

Councilor Klett suggested that we have a staff person come in to discuss the blighted property and asked if it has to be a vacant piece of property. Mr. Salomone said yes, it has to be a vacant property.

Mayor Wright said that it's taking longer than expected just because it's balancing act between personal property rights.

Councilor Klett requested that it be included as an agenda item with the Attorney or a staff person to discuss our options. She said that watching CPTV and there was some interesting information and regulations in place and this might be the kind of thing we could look at. Secondly, at the June 22nd meeting she had suggested getting

a Council rules subcommittee together and the Town Manager put forward a memo suggesting that we do that. She requested that Mayor Wright and Mr. Banach discuss appointing members to that subcommittee with the purpose of looking our rules which we can do at any time to add some kind of public participation before a vote, and in doing that it might let people feel that they have an opportunity to express their views.

Councilor Cohen noted remarks about an act which limits FOI at senior centers and will protect the information at the Senior Center and those who participate in its programs. She said that we have an ideal Center and wonderful programs and also have a very active Director Dianne Stone who is very involved and gives Ms. Stone credit for what she's done. Another issue is Val Ginn is having problems with the Farmers Market, bringing them to Newington at their current location in the town center parking lot, but she heard from the First Congregational Church Street has offered to donate their lawn for the Farmers Market which is a great location. Councilor Cohen is pleased that this demonstrates the cooperation and willingness of the people of Newington to come forward and help.

Councilor Nasinnyk speaking about adding to the next Agenda, the Council needs to appoint a Town Manager Evaluation committee. She would like to see this item on the Agenda for the next meeting.

Councilor Nagel asked Mr. Salomone about the progress of the Parking Lot. Mr. Salomone said that there are some items visible, most of the drainage had to be done at this point, which is being completed, with catch basins, foundations for the lighting, so there will be more visible progress on that side now. He said that generally it will be finished on time in September.

Councilor Casasanta reminded everyone of the Extravaganza this week, which showcases our Town beautifully and encouraged everyone to come out and join the festivities.

Councilor Lenares asked Councilor McBride if the completion date will be in September.

Councilor McBride said that things are going very smoothly with the Market Square project and should be completed in September. He said that you may see people around town inspecting and taking measurements etc. but it is working according to schedule.

Mayor Wright mentioned Extravaganza week, he hopes everyone comes down and we get into the week with the Carnival going Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights, with the concert in the park on Friday, there's something for everyone and the Carnival going all day long on Saturday along with the crafts and vendors and community service groups with booths and that evening we have the fireworks. He also mentioned that the single stream recycling kicked off and with a few hiccoughs but mostly went very well. The order for some of the smaller bins won't be filled for a few more months so try to grow into the larger recycling bin, fill it and don't worry about the garbage can.

With the Farmers Market, he remarked that this is a growing pain year and is hoping it will get back to Constitution Square next year.

XIII ADJOURNMENT

Councilor Casasanta moved to adjourn at 8:10 PM – Seconded by Councilor McBride – Vote 8 - 0
Councilor Banach absent

Respectfully Submitted,

Mary Richard
Council Clerk